

Remarks/Arguments

Reconsideration of this application is requested.

Claim Status

Claims 1-20 are pending. Since no claims are added, canceled or amended, no listing of claims is required under 37 CFR 1.121.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC 103(a)

Claims 1-3, 12, 13 and 15-20 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as obvious over Shih (US 2003/0196011) in view of Ott (US 6,614,471). Claim 14 is rejected as obvious over Shih in view of Ott and Chen (US 6,992,799). Claims 4 and 6-11 are rejected as obvious over Ohara in view of Ott. In response, applicant traverses the rejections and submits that claims 1-20 distinguish over all references of record.

The present invention is directed to an image processing system having a scanner 11, printer 21 and client PC 31, as connected in FIG. 1. Scanner 11 acts as a host to printer 21 and PC 31 acts as a host to scanner 11. As disclosed in FIG. 5 and paragraph 0025, an original document is first scanned to obtain scanned data (step ST 31). Then, the scanned data is converted in the scanner into a data format of the PC which can be used by printer 21 to execute PC printing (step ST 33). Conventionally, a PC performed this format conversion and not a scanner. However, in the present invention, a copying operation between scanner 11 and printer 21 can be executed by using the scanned data that is converted into a PC data format for PC printing on printer 21, without the need for connection to PC 31. This feature allows an existing printer, without a special conversion function, to be utilized in the copying operation between scanner 11 and printer 21. Thus, printer 21 can receive data from scanner 11 as if the data were formatted and sent by PC 31.

Independent claims 1, 4, 6, 9, 12 and 16 recite this feature. For example, claim 1 recites:

...means for converting a data format of the scanned data in the scanner device into a same format as a data format received from the PC to be forwarded to the printer device for printing.

Pages 3 and 8 of the Action concede that Shih and Ohara, respectively, do not disclose a means for converting the scanned data in the scanner into a same format as a data format received from a remote device to be forwarded to the printer device. However, the Action asserts that Ott discloses all of the above recited component parts. Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Ott is directed to luminance correction in scanned images. Ott discloses an optical image scanner that scans an object, such as a printed document, photograph or transparency, digitally into a color pixel array and a luminance pixel array (see col. 1, lines 10-15 and col. 2, lines 1-9). In particular, Ott teaches a scanner provided to, "convert an object to be scanned... into a digital electronic signal." The term "convert" clearly means "scan" in this context and teaches scanning an object to obtain scanned data. Then, the scanned data is processed by calculating a luminance correction factor that is applied to the pixel arrays to provide improved image quality (see col. 2, lines 10-30). Image enhancement alters the scanned data but the format of the scanned data does not change. Thus, format conversion of the scanned data is clearly not disclosed.

Nevertheless, even if scanning a document is construed to be a conversion process, Ott would teach only a single conversion process that obtains scanned data. Under this interpretation, the present invention, by contrast, requires two conversion processes; one to obtain the scanned data by scanning (see claim 1, line 2) and a second to convert the scanned data into a data format for printing. Thus, under either interpretation, Ott does not remedy the deficiencies of Shih or Ohara.

In sum, Ott merely scans a document and processes the scanned data to improve image quality. There is no disclosure or suggestion that the scanned data is converted into a second data format in the scanner, as is required by the

independent claims. Ott simply transmits the scanned data to the printer without data format conversion and would require a conversion function in the printer, as needed conventionally. Moreover, neither the Action nor the references provide any teaching, motivation or suggestion to combine the Shih, Ohara and Ott references. The ancillary references do not remedy the deficiencies of Ott in this regard.

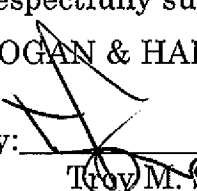
Since Shih, Ohara and Ott do not disclose or suggest each and every element of independent claims 1, 4, 6, 9, 12 and 16, they render obvious those claims or claims dependent thereon. The rejections under 35 USC 103(a) should be withdrawn.

Conclusion

For these reasons, this application is believed to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the final Action, and allowance of this application, is respectfully requested. The Examiner is urged to telephone the undersigned to resolve any issues that remain after entry of this reply. Any fees due with this response may be charged to our Deposit Account No. 50-1314.

Respectfully submitted,
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